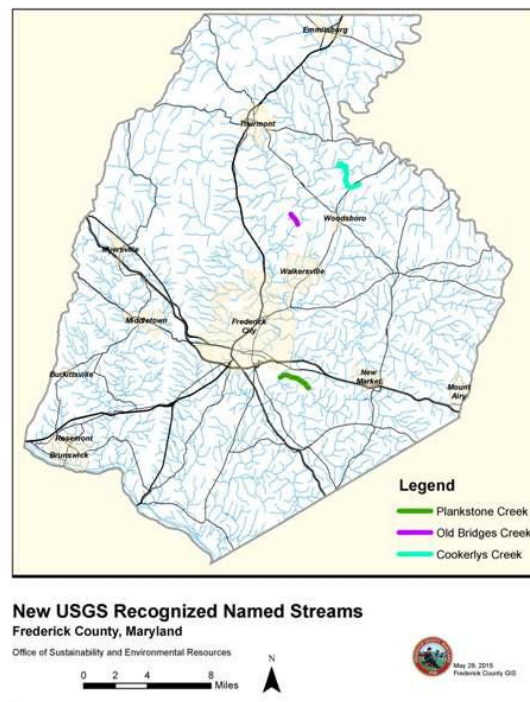




Three Frederick Creeks Are Officially Named

Jeff Feaga, Office of Sustainability and Environmental Resources

Three creeks in Frederick County have recently been given official names that are recognized by the United States Board on Geographic Names. After hundreds of years of living, farming, and travelling through Frederick County, people have come together to agree upon a name that will be standard on any future maps or reference materials. But, before we get the story of these three “new” creeks, do you ever wonder how the local name of a town, mountain, or a stream is made official so that it shows up on official maps and literature? As America was rapidly explored and developed, there is no doubt that locals were at times given multiple names, nonsensical names, or names which did not stand the test of time. These misnomers must have been at the very least confusing, if not wasteful or even dangerous, due to the inability to direct resources or emergency personnel to a standardized geographic name.



Map showing the location of the three creeks that have recently been officially-named through a process with the United States Board on Geographic Names.

The United States Board on Geographic Names, which is operated by the U.S. Department of the Interior's Geological Survey (USGS), recognized the importance of geographic names. In the Foreword section of the document Principles, Policies, and Procedures for Domestic Geographic Names, the federal office states the following:

"Confusion and controversy about geographic names and their applications to places and features led President Benjamin Harrison to establish the U.S. Board on Geographic Names in 1890. That early Executive Order was based on a recognition that conflict in naming geographic features were, in fact, a serious detriment to the orderly process of exploring and settling this country. A later decision, in 1906, by President Theodore Roosevelt to extend the responsibilities of the Board to include standardization of all geographic names for Federal use was a wise and far-reaching decision that, coupled with the Harrison order, forms the foundation for the present organization of the U.S. Board on Geographic Names established in Public Law 80-242, signed by President Truman in 1947.

The existence of a body of standardized geographic names widely available on a national basis, but related strongly to local usage, makes a large contribution to savings and efficiency in the operation of government, business and industry, communications, and education. The U.S. Board on Geographic Names is at the hub of a national network of State and academic geographic names authorities who are working hard and continuously to improve that body of names by approving new names in a responsible manner and changing or correcting existing names."

In March 2015, the United States Board on Geographic Names officially recognized the name of three Frederick County Creeks: Plankstone Creek, Cookerlys Creek, and Old Bridges Creek. A map showing the location of these creeks within the county can be found [here](#). Three other creeks in Carroll County, Maryland were also given official names. The process of deciding on names for these creeks took several years in total. The Monocacy Scenic River Citizens' Advisory Board (River Board) launched the public contest to solicit potential names from local residents. Over 35 entries were received, according to Tim Goodfellow, a planner with Frederick County and staff to the Monocacy Scenic River Board. A list of potential names was vetted with the United States Board on Geographic Names, with the winning name being the one that was the most relevant to the history and location of the creek. The official USGS descriptions (searchable at <http://geonames.usgs.gov/>) for each of the newly named creeks are as follows, with a map link to each. Thanks to Jason Jones, GIS Specialist with Frederick County, for creating the maps.



A new official sign showing previously unnamed Cookerlys Creek Photos taken by Tim Goodfellow.

[Cookeerlys Creek](#)

The name refers to an 18th century tavern located adjacent to the stream. The creek is approximately 2.9 miles long; heads 0.24 miles southeast of New Midway, flows southwest and then generally northwest to enter the Monocacy River 1.5 miles northwest of New Midway.



Aerial map showing the flow path of Cookerlys Creek.

[Old Bridges Creek](#)

The name refers to two nearby old bridges, one of which is still standing. The Creek is 0.8 miles long; heads 2.6 miles east of Lewistown, 15 miles north of Urbana, flows southeast to enter the Monocacy River 2.4 miles west southwest of Woodsboro.

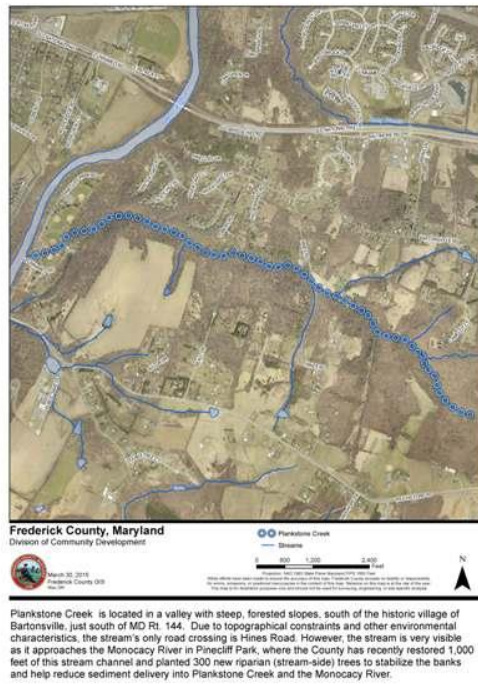
Aerial map showing the flow path of Old Bridges Creek.



[Plankstone Creek](#)

The name refers to a style of stone quarried nearby. The creek is approximately 2.2 miles long; heads 1.2 miles southwest of Bartonsville, 3.8 miles north-northeast of Urbana, flows northwest into Pinecliff Park to enter the Monocacy River.

Frederick County Stream No. 1 - PLANKSTONE CREEK



Aerial map showing the flow path of Plankstone Creek.